

VZCZCXRO2740
PP RUEHAG RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHLH RUEHPW RUEHROV
DE RUEHAA #1286 2701345
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 261345Z SEP 08
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1625
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 4341
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2153
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2018
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2589
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMFIISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2928

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASHGABAT 001286

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, INL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/26/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: SOURCE SAYS FIRING OF CUSTOMS CHIEF
IN JUNE WAS DUE TO PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO INSTALL HIS OWN
PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

REF: ASHGABAT 0783

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Sylvia Reed Curran for reasons 1.
4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (C) According to UN Office on Drugs and Crime Turkmenistan Office Project Coordinator Ercan Saka (please protect), President Berdimuhamedov fired State Customs Service Chairman Muratberdi Annaliyev in June because the president wanted Yaylym Berdiyev, at that time chairman of the State Migration Service, to introduce the same kind of modernization and operational upgrades to Customs as he did at the State Migration Service. Saka added that Berdiyev is "close" to the president. Saka did not mention the incident at Serakhs border crossing checkpoint as a contributing factor to the personnel change (reftel).

¶2. (C) COMMENT: It appears that Berdimuhamedov is replacing former President Niyazov's old guard with young leaders he prefers, as post speculated in reftel. Post is watching for other similar leadership changes and will continue to report on them as they occur. END COMMENT.

CURRAN